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NND 968038
By SP/PSW Date 5/9/98



Department of State

TELEGRAM

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HARMFUL EFFECT ON US/INDIA RELATIONS.

3. SECRETARY INITIATED DISCUSSION THIS SUBJECT SAYING HE WAS PERPLEXED AT PRIME MINISTER GANDHI'S PUBLIC REMARKS REGARDING CIA ACTIVITIES IN INDIA. INITIALLY SINGH TRIED TO SIDE STEP ISSUE IN LIGHTEARTED MANNER SAYING MRS. GANDHI PAID COMPLIMENT TO CIA FOR ITS ACTIVITIES. SECRETARY REPLIED THIS CLEARLY NOT OUR UNDERSTANDING OF HER REMARK AND SISCO SET OUT DETAILS OF ALLEGATIONS BY CONGRESS PRESIDENT AND CHIEF MINISTERS WHICH MADE CLEAR TO US PRIME MINISTER'S MEANING.

4. SINGH THEN SHIFTED TACTICS REFERRING TO PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS WITH SECRETARY OF THIS SUBJECT. SAID WHILE PERHAPS IT IS NOT EASY FOR EITHER SIDE TO PROVE WHAT TAKING PLACE, IT HAS NOT BEEN DIFFICULT FOR GOI TO COME TO KNOW OF CIA ACTIVITIES. GOI HAS ITS OWN SOURCES AND KNOWS THAT CIA HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH PEOPLE IN INDIA IN "ABNORMAL WAYS". SAID GOI AWARE FUNCTION OF SUCH INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATIONS IS TO GET INFORMATION, AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE. FOR EXAMPLE, GOI HAD INFORMATION THAT PROCEEDINGS OF CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE WERE KNOWN TO US OFFICIALS WITHIN TWO HOURS OF MEETINGS. SAID WHEN THIS HAPPENS IT OFFENDS PEOPLE. SINGH CONCLUDED THAT IT WOULD BE GOOD IF AS RESULT PRESENT CONTROVERSY ACTIVITIES OF AMERICANS IN INDIA WOULD BECOME MORE CAUTIOUS.

5. IN REPLY SECRETARY SAID HE COULDN'T EMPHASIZE TOO MUCH HOW HARMFUL THESE FALSE ACCUSATIONS ARE TO US/INDIA RELATIONS. PARTICULARLY DISTURBING WAS PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT THAT INDIA DID NOT HAVE TO PROVE ACTIVITIES BUT THAT IT WAS UP TO CIA TO DISPROVE THEM. THIS WAS OFFENSIVE AND CONTRARY TO OUR DEMOCRATIC TRADITIONS. SECRETARY TOOK PARTICULAR EXCEPTION TO INDIA'S MAKING CHARGES IN PUBLIC SAYING PRESIDENT NIXON FEELS AS STRONGLY ABOUT THIS AS HE DOES. SAID IF INDIA HAS SUSPICIONS IT SHOULD RAISE THEM WITH USG PRIVATELY FIRST. SAID WE WOULD EXAMINE THEM AND IF NECESSARY TAKE CORRECTIVE ACTION.

6. SINGH CONTINUED THAT CIA IS KNOWN TO ACT IN WAYS NOT

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IN INTEREST OF ESTABLISHED GOVERNMENTS. INDIA IS NOT EXCEPTION TO THIS. WHILE INDIA DOES NOT HAVE JUDICIAL PROOF -- AND PREFERS NOT TO RESORT TO USE OF TAPE RECORDERS AND OTHER DEVICES TO PRODUCE SUCH PROOF -- IT HAS NO DOUBT ABOUT ACTIVITIES. SINGH THEN SAID HE WAS SURE SECRETARY KNEW THAT CIA SOMETIMES FUNCTIONED IN WAYS NOT KNOWN TO POLICY LEVEL OFFICIALS OF ADMINISTRATION AND ON OCCASION MAY BE RELUCTANT TO SEND INFORMATION REGARDING THEIR ACTIVITIES TO SUCH OFFICIALS. CLAIMED CIA WAS SEPARATE FROM ADMINISTRATION, SAYING THERE WAS GENERAL UNDERSTANDING CIA ACTED ON ITS OWN.

7. SECRETARY REPLIED THIS IS CLEARLY NOT SO. WE KNOW PRECISELY WHAT SUCH ORGANIZATIONS DO. FURTHERMORE, USG HASN'T SLIGHTEST INTEREST IN INTERFERING IN INDIA. SISCO EMPHSIZED THAT AMBASSADOR KEATING HAD KNOWN EVERYTHING ABOUT CIA IN INDIA. HE HAD BEEN SCRUPULOUS IN INQUIRING OF GOI FOR SPECIFIC ALLEGATIONS WHICH HE COULD LOOK INTO. WE HAD PURSUED THIS ISSUE WITH GOI IN 1970 AND IT HAD BEEN UNABLE TO BACK UP CHARGES. WE HAVE BEEN TRYING TO GET INTO DIALOGUE WITH GOI BUT THESE ALLEGATIONS POISON ATMOSPHERE.

8. SECRETARY THEN REPEATED THAT US HADN'T ANY INTEREST WHATSOEVER IN CREATING DIFFICULTIES WITHIN INDIA. INQUIRED AGAIN WHY GOI HAD MADE PUBLIC STATEMENTS. SUCH STATEMENTS GAVE US THE IMPRESSION INDIA EITHER DELIBERATELY TRYING TO CAUSE TROUBLE OR A LITTLE PARANOIAC. IF INDIA MAKES THESE UNSUBSTANTIATED CHARGES THIS WILL BE HARMFUL TO OUR RELATIONS.

GDS.
ROGERS

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